

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim1 (currently amended) A stabilized phenolic resole resin composition useful for preparing phenolic urethane binders comprising consisting essentially of a phenolic resole resin and an effective stabilizing amount of an ortho ester an ortho ester is selected from the group consisting of triethyl orthoformate, trimethyl orthoformate, and mixtures thereof.

Claim2 (original) The stabilized phenolic resole resin composition of claim 1 which also contains a solvent selected from the group consisting of aromatic hydrocarbon solvents, ester solvents, polar solvents, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 3 (original) The stabilized phenolic resole resin composition of claim 2 wherein the stabilized phenolic resole resin composition comprises a polybenzylic ether phenolic resin prepared by reacting an aldehyde with a phenol such that the molar ratio of aldehyde to phenol is from 1.1:1 to 3:1 in the presence of a divalent metal catalyst.

Claim 4 (currently amended) The stabilized phenolic resole resin composition of claim 3 wherein the phenol used to prepare the phenolic resole resin of the stabilized phenolic resole resin composition is ~~selected from the group consisting of phenol, bisphenol, o-cresol, p-cresol, and mixtures thereof.~~

Claim 5 (original) The stabilized phenolic resole resin composition of claim 4 wherein the aldehyde used to prepare the phenolic resin of the stabilized phenolic resole resin composition is formaldehyde.

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (currently amended) The stabilized phenolic resole resin composition of claim 6 5 wherein the amount of solvent in the resin composition is from 20 weight percent to 80 weight percent based upon the weight of the phenolic resin composition.

Claim 8 (original) The stabilized phenolic resole resin composition of claim 7 wherein the amount of ortho ester is from about 0.1 weight percent to about 1.5 weight percent based upon the weight of the phenolic resin.

Claim 9 (original) The stabilized phenolic resole resin composition of claim 6 wherein the phenolic resole resin of the stabilized phenolic resole resin composition is an alkoxy-modified benzylic ether phenolic resole resin and the catalyst used to prepare said resin is a divalent zinc salt.

Claim 10 (original) A foundry binder system comprising the phenolic resole resin component of ~~claim~~ claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9 and a polyisocyanate component.

Claims 11-16 (canceled)